

Executive Summary

Over the course of three 2-hour working sessions, the leadership team at ACME Engineering identified and examined the firm's primary business objectives. During these meetings, they discovered critical issues that are impeding attainment of those objectives. This document highlights the primary issue discovered, and outlines root causes, business impact, and a framework for how ACME Engineering could address the root causes.

Critical Business Issue #1 – Lack of Alignment on Ideal Client Profile

ACME Engineering's top strategic goal is to increase their share of wallet in a growing and strategic market sector. The firm has evolved into being perceived as a leader in providing services in this market area. However, the firm is also in the midst of leadership transition. And, it has been challenging to build alignment among all members of the team for this vision.

Root Causes of This Issue

Hard to let go of friends. One cause of the lack of alignment is the difficulty in letting go of some clients that, while holding the position of long-time clients (and friends) they do not fit with the new growth model of the business. The small projects typically associated with these clients consume resource allocation that is out of alignment with the financial goals of the firm.

Lack of leadership communication. Another reason is a change in the communication structure that has taken place as leadership transitions. The firm has gone from five members of the leadership team to eight. And, without a clear framework of communication, some members of the original leadership team are feeling displaced. Used to a decision-making process that made it possible for everyone to bring their ideas for open discussion, the addition of new members to the team has adjusted the weekly meeting agenda and not all input is being heard.

Decision-making process is unclear. With the restructuring that has taken place during the leadership transition, there are some members of the leadership team that are unintentionally creating bottlenecks in

delivery. This has also resulted in inefficiency as team members find themselves having to reacquaint themselves with projects when meetings are rescheduled.

The Impact to the Business (Reason for Change)

\$1.7M in profit. Increasing the firm's share of wallet with this growing and strategic market would increase firm's position in the industry and increase gross revenue from \$15MM to \$22MM in 2019. At the higher margins of these more lucrative projects, net profit increases \$1.68M annually.

\$430k in reductions to wasted labor. Aligning the communication framework within the leadership team and developing a structure where all leadership roles have a primary and secondary contact would reduce or eliminate the project bottlenecks. This would reduce wasted manhours, saving up to \$430K per year and allow the firm to maintain profitability levels by not needing to hire additional staff to get the work done.

Solution: Approach and Components

Build a clear ideal client profile. The leadership team identified a need to develop an "Ideal Client Profile" making use of metrics to quantify the value of a client and guide consistent selection criteria when intaking work. ACME Engineers needs a clear understanding of the Client Lifetime Value (CLV – the aggregated profit of the client over the life of the relationship) and clear insights into client sentiment and loyalty indicators. By aggregating these two insights, the leaders will know which clients to focus growth efforts on, and which to diminish services with.

Journey map our decision-making process. Further, the leadership team agreed to create a Journey Map of their decision-making process for each of the internal stakeholders. This map makes clear how each stakeholder arrives at the need to make a decision, and who/how they interact with others to arrive at the decision. Once the decision journey map is complete, a decision-making framework will be communicated to the entire staff, so all members of the team are informed and enabled to get answers when needed and reduce waste / rework.